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Russia's Election Committee Confirms Date of Presidential Election

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

Russia will hold presidential elections on March 18 next year, a spokesperson for the Central Elections Committee told the state-run TASS news agency on Monday.

The date coincides with the four-year anniversary of Russia's annexation of the Crimean peninsula. The news followed the Labor Ministry's announcement that Russians will have four days off from March 8 to 11 next year.

"So, we say it officially that the elections will be organized on March 18," Grishina was cited as saying by TASS on Monday.

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Though the date was already widely known, this is the first time an electoral official has

confirmed the timing of the elections slated to give President Vladimir Putin his fourth term.

Citing three sources close the Kremlin, the RBC outlet reported earlier this year that Putin would likely run as an independent in an effort to capitalize on his widespread public support.

Opposition leader and presidential hopeful Alexei Navalny, who drew large crowds to campaign events in Russia's provinces this weekend, is technically barred from running because of criminal convictions which his supporters say are politically motivated.

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